

UGSP Quarterly Newsletter

Spring 2018

Written and Assembled by the UGSP Newsletter Committee

Kevin P. McPherson and Brian A. Ho

Welcome to the Family by *Brian A. Ho*

Each year, our UGSP family grows. Below is a list of all the new and returning scholars. It highlights the diversity of training for our incoming cohort and provides an opportunity to look up the general theme of the research groups they hope to join. Let this serve as a soft, informal introduction to the new scholars; material for starting conversations, if you will. And to our incoming cohort: congratulations to all who have graduated, and welcome to the NIH everybody!

First Name	Last Name	Year	University	Major	PI/Lab	IC
Alia	Alhomsy	Junior	George Mason University	Biology	Niki Moutsopoulos	NIDCR
Larissa	Ault	Junior	University of Hawaii, Manoa	Molecular Cell Biology	Daniel Douek	NIAID
Nahid	Baghdadi	Junior	Michigan State University	Chemistry	David VanderWeele	NCI
Natalia	Batchenkova	Senior	University of Arkansas	Biology	Craig Blackstone	NINDS
Stefanie	Brizuela	Junior	University of California, Santa Cruz	Biomolecular Engineering	Elissa Lei	NIDDK
Melanie	Delgado	Senior	American University	Public Health	Steven Jacobson	NINDS
Saeed	Fathi	Senior	University of California, Los Angeles	Neuroscience and Biochemistry	Daniel Reich	NINDS
Mahin	Hossain	Sophomore	The Ohio State University	Neuroscience	Jessica Gill	NINR
Candace	Moore	Junior	Virginia Commonwealth University	Psychology and Professional Health Science	Kuan Hong Wang	NIMH
Nahom	Mossazghi	Senior	University of Minnesota, Twin Cities	Neuroscience	Catherine Weisz	NIDCD
Alexis	Pederson	Junior	University of Texas, Austin	Neuroscience and Russian	Bibiana Bielekova	NINDS
Linh	Pham	Senior	Humboldt State University	Cell/Molecular Biology	Ellen Leibenluft	NIMH
Caitlin	Stavish	Senior	Boston University	Neuroscience and Psychology	Sharon Savage	NCI
Ashley	Thompson	Senior	Converse College	Biochemistry	Alan Remaley	NHLBI
Sierra	Wilson	Senior	Willamette University	Chemistry	Lab of Terry Fry	NCI

UGSP Scholars who are returning or have renewed their scholarship status.

First Name	Last Name	Year	University	Major	PI/Lab	IC
Anila	Afzal	Senior	University of Maryland, Baltimore County	Biology, Psychology	Mark Rohrbaugh	OD
Mia	Rosenfeld	Senior	University of North Carolina, Wilmington	Chemistry	Sadhana Jackson	NCI
Megan	Andres	Senior	University of North Georgia	Biology	Samer Hattar	NIMH
Duy	Phan	Senior	Johns Hopkins University	Neuroscience	Kelvin Choi	NIMHD
Danielle	Duarte	Senior	University of New Mexico	Biology, Psychology	Mark Levine	NIDDK
Nicholas	Munyan	Senior	University of Maryland, College Park	Chemistry	Thomas Quinn	NIAID
Kelly	Nguyen	Senior	San Diego State University	Health Communication	Laura Koehly	NHGRI

Taking Our Next Steps by *Brian A. Ho*

Our UGSP family is made up of a brilliant and diverse group of students. Just looking at the list of incoming scholars, it's immediately clear that we come to the NIH from all over the nation. Our chosen disciplines, while related to the biomedical sciences, are all quite varied; a broad cross section of the field as a whole. And all of us bring our unique identities and experiences -- social, cultural, educational, etc. -- to the program, and use them to make it better. It's no surprise, then, that we all walk our own interesting paths during our time here at the NIH. Here's a sample of what some of our current fellows are up to, and where they are headed:



Zaw Phyto

Zaw Phyto (currently continuing his research as a CRTA): Zaw was recently accepted at both Harvard Medical School and Johns Hopkins Medical School. He will attend Johns Hopkins Medical School in the fall.

Emilie Fisher (currently continuing her research as an IRTA): Emilie was accepted to a range of MD/PhD programs for fall of 2018, including Weill-Cornell/Sloan Kettering/Rockefeller's Tri-Institutional Program. She has decided to matriculate at Vanderbilt University's MD/PhD program.

Launick Saint-Fort (currently continuing her research as an IRTA):

Launick was recently awarded a Fulbright US Student Award Fellowship to do research in Luxembourg. She will be studying “The Impact of Immigration on the State of Tobacco in the Grand-Duchy of Luxembourg.”

Chase Morgan: while continuing his work on a novel player in the MAP Kinase pathway here at NIH, will also be applying to MD-PhD programs. He has also gotten involved with a group called HIPS, a non-profit seeking to reduce the stigma for sex workers and drug users, and help improve their quality of life.

Luis Perez Valencia: also remaining at NIH to continue studying how the Ebolavirus glycoprotein induces cell death.



Launick Saint-Fort



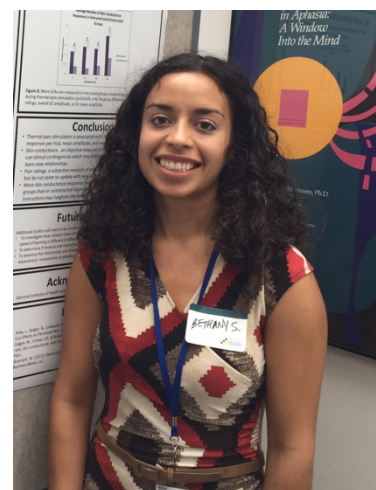
Quang Nguyen

Quang Nguyen: worked in the Vaccine Research Center, and has been given an opportunity to seek an Erasmus Mundus joint Master’s degree in Science, Technology and Health as related to vaccines. The Leading International Vaccinology Education (LIVE) program has awarded him a full scholarship to pursue these studies in Europe, which is a great opportunity to expand cultural horizons.

Leana Ramos: will continue to examine how an interaction between a small protein and a efflux pump, capable of purging multiple kinds of drugs, affects the response of *E. coli* to various antibiotics, here at the NIH.

Bethany (Sauls) Lebowitz: plans to start a Sports and Psychology Master’s program in Denver, CO, but is taking the rest of the summer to hone her climbing skills through individual training and a mountaineering class. She hopes to be an instructor and mentor for anyone interested in both indoor and outdoor climbing. She also seeks to continue to use climbing as a lead meetup for women of color who climb.

(Brian writing) I have also greatly enjoyed my time here at the NIH as a postbac. The resources and exposure, scientific and otherwise, have helped me to find my own path forward into a field that I find truly fascinating. As such, I will be leaving for graduate school to start my PhD at Stanford University. There is no limit to what can be accomplished here, and there’s always someone willing to help you tackle issues that are impeding your progress; whether your experiment failed for the thousandth time, or you’re having some friction with your coworkers, or you just are having challenges coping with personal problems. We have highlighted some of these resources in this issue, so take note of them, inquire about what else is available, and use them as required. And, as always, enjoy your time here!



Bethany (Sauls) Lebowitz

Where Are They Now? Dr. Rebecca Burgess, Former UGSP Scholar by *Kevin McPherson*



Where did you grow up/are you originally from?

I grew up just outside of the small town of Cooperstown, NY in an even smaller town of 600 people. But my high school (and all the jobs) were in Cooperstown.

Where did you complete your undergraduate degree? What degree did you complete (BA or BS)? What year did you complete the degree?

I went to Cornell University for my Bachelor of Science degree, which I completed in 2002. I majored in Biology, with a concentration in Biochemistry.

Where did you complete your graduate degree(s)? What degree(s) did you complete (MPH, MS, PhD, MD etc.)? What year did you complete these degree(s)?

I entered the Ph.D. Program in Biological Sciences at Columbia University in 2002, just after completing my B.S. Through the program requirements, I earned an MS in 2004 and an M. Phil in 2005, completing the Ph.D and defending my dissertation in 2009.

What is your current position and did you have any prior experience?

I completed my UGSP payback as a postdoc at NIH (NCI) and in 2015, I started my own lab at Stevenson University, a primarily undergraduate institution just north of Baltimore, MD. I gained the requisite teaching experience for this kind of position by taking an adjunct teaching position at Goucher College during my postdoc.

What advice would you give to new UGSP scholars?

Seek experience in a wide variety of techniques-- in particular, computational techniques—learn R!

How did your time at the NIH impact your career outlook or perspectives?

My time at NIH showed me that there were many career paths that a Ph.D. scientist could take. I had a very supportive mentor and was able to take advantage of the vast resources for both advancing my science and for career exploration. Between the offerings of 'Management Bootcamp,' 'Scientists Teaching Science,' writing for 'The Catalyst' as well as on-campus teaching opportunities, I was well-prepared for the next step by developing the skills necessary to pursue such diverse careers.

What important things did you learn during your time at the NIH?

I learned an incredible number of important things during my time at NIH. It's impossible to list them all. Between the myriad lab techniques, various soft skills like time management and interpersonal communication, it was a formative time for me as a scientist.

Where in your academic training did you complete your UGSP payback? Given the opportunity, would you have done it at a different time?

I did a postdoc (UGSP) payback, and I don't think I'd do it differently. NIH is a great place to take on the difficult transition from postdoc to career scientist.

What are some of your current goals for the new year in terms of your career?

My current goal is to submit an NSF grant this summer. I am seeking funding for building my research into our biology curriculum to engage more students in authentic research.

My other goals is to find creative ways to blend my teaching and scholarship and build that into a better work-life balance. Academics are prone to overwork because we care so deeply about our scholarship, but at a primarily undergraduate institution, teaching responsibilities take precedence and consume an enormous amount of time. This can lead to working excessive hours to keep research projects moving. I am just now finding this balance now that I am in my 3rd year as full-time faculty.

What did you research at the NIH and with whom did you do the research (PI and/or postdoc advisors)?

My work at NIH investigated the role of chromatin alterations on DNA damage response signaling in cancer cells, which was performed in the laboratory of Dr. Tom Misteli (NCI)

What current research or scientific endeavor are you embarked on?

My current research is in the same field of DNA damage response signaling and repair. I am studying the function of chromatin remodelers in the repair of double-strand breaks, but I am using yeast as my primary model organism, and using human cells sparingly.

The Office of Intramural Training and Education (OITE) Career Services by *Lori Conlan, PhD and Amanda Dumsch*

The OITE Career Services offers resources to support the career development of all trainees across the NIH. Whether you are just beginning your training or looking to transition out of your institute, the OITE can help you with your professional development goals.



Are you looking to develop new skill sets and competencies during your time as a trainee? The OITE offers workshops/trainings to help build your transferable skills on topics, such as: communication, teaching/mentoring, leadership/management, the responsible conduct of research, and career development.

Perhaps you are nearing the end of your training and soon will embark upon a job search? The OITE has dedicated staff to assist you in getting to the next stage of your career, whether that next step is: graduate/professional school, an academic or non-academic job, or transitioning away from the bench. One-on-one and group trainings are available on career development topics, like: CVs/resumes, cover letters, personal statements, interviewing, networking, and negotiating.

To help better understand how to utilize OITE, check out some of the online resources ([Career Blog](#), [Videocasts](#)) as well as OITE's upcoming [events](#). You can also make an introductory [appointment](#) with a career counselor to help get you pointed in the right direction.

Useful URL addresses:

1. OITE Career Blog: <https://oitecareersblog.wordpress.com/?>
2. OITE Video Casts: https://www.training.nih.gov/oite_videocasts
3. OITE Events: <https://www.training.nih.gov/events/upcoming>
4. OITE Appointment Maker with career counselor:
https://www.training.nih.gov/career_services/appointments

Wellness Resources at OITE by Michael Sheridan, PhD

Part of “being successful” is learning strategies and involving yourself in activities that support you as a whole person, not just a scientist. The OITE is committed to offering resources that support trainee/fellow wellness and holistic self-care through a number resources, including:

1. OITE library where you can check out wellness-related books.
2. Drop-in Discussion Group every Tuesday from 3:00-4:00 focused on stress management/wellness issues. Rotates every other week between Postdocs and Postbacs. Look for announcement in OITE list serves.
3. Twice weekly Drop-In Mindfulness Meditation Group (noon on Tuesdays and 5:00 pm on Thursdays). No special clothes or equipment; just come when you can.
4. 2-hour Wellness Workshop: “Tune In & Take Care” – next one scheduled for Thursday, May 24th from 10-12 noon. See OITE website to register.
5. Monthly OITE Wellness Events with different topics each month. Next one in June is “Get Cool and Get Connected” (with popsicles!) Be sure to read upcoming announcement in OITE list serves!
6. Time-limited individual wellness advising with OITE Wellness Counselors.
7. Referral to external mental health services.

So be proactive and *care enough about yourself to take good care of yourself!*